

# CONFERENCE *connection*

Alabama • Georgia • Mississippi  
South Carolina • Tennessee • NW Florida

## SOUTHEAST UCC Conference



January 1, 2016

### We've Moved to a New Location!

The offices of the Southeast Conference have moved, as we are leasing an office suite in The Commons at 125 Ellis Street NE in Atlanta. The location is easily accessible via public transportation (the Peachtree Center MARTA train station is just two blocks to the west) and is centrally located near major interstate highways. ([Click here for a map.](#))

Our new mailing address will be 105 Courtland St NE, Atlanta GA 30303-2422. This is the address of First Congregational Church UCC in downtown Atlanta. We are pleased that we are able to have closer connections with a local church and look forward to welcoming visitors to our new space. Parking and entry are at the back of the building.



### 2015 OCWM Commitments Due by January 11

Local congregations should have received the third quarter statement of your congregation's OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission) Basic Support Statement for 2015, along with the Pledge Card for your congregation's commitment to OCWM Basic Support for 2016. This will help us plan for the coming year. Please return the Pledge Card before January 15, 2016.

**We will close the books for 2015 on January 11, 2016. Please ensure that your 2015 commitment is in the office by that date. If we do not receive your contribution by that date, your contribution will be listed for 2016. [Read more...](#)**

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### Coming Events

**SEC Staff Meeting**  
Thu, January 7, 2016  
Conference Office

**MID Annual Retreat**  
Fri, January 8 - Sat,  
January 9, 2016  
Pleasant Hill, TN

**Winter Youth Retreat**  
Fri, January 15 - Sun,  
January 17, 2016  
Blowing Rock Retreat Center

**Applications Open for Conference Grants**  
Mon, January 18

**Board of Directors**



## Caring Community

We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2016. Each month, we will publish a weekly list for the month and post them weekly on our Facebook page. We encourage you to include these prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers.

- [Click here to download the entire 2016 prayer list](#)

### Highlights for this month:

- Prayers for the family of **Rev. Hal Schoup** who passed away in December. [Read more...](#)
- Prayers for the family of **Rev. Bill Bateman** who passed away in December. [Read more...](#)
- Prayers for **Rev. Laurie Hill** for surgery scheduled in January. She is serving Fairfield Glade Community Church in Tennessee.
- Prayers for **Rev. Bob Hurst**, United Church of Huntsville as he recovers from hip surgery on Dec 28.
- Continued prayers for **Rev. Michael McCaulley**, Peace Church, Clemson South Carolina.
- For **Garden of Grace UCC** in Columbia South Carolina and the surrounding communities as they continue to recover from additional flooding.
- Prayers for **Rev. Angie Wright** as she resigns her position as founding pastor of Beloved Community Church in Birmingham Alabama. Her last Sunday is January 10.
- Welcome to **Rev. Bruce Schoup** as the Designated Minister for a two year term at Peace Church in Clemson South Carolina.
- Prayers for the family of **Rev. George Dominick** who passed away on January 1. [Read more...](#)

### Churches in Transition:

Oak Grove Congregational Christian, Pine Mountain Georgia; Church of the Savior, Alpharetta Georgia; Pensacola UCC, Pensacola Florida; Pilgrim Congregational UCC, Chattanooga Tennessee; Brookmeade Congregational UCC, Nashville Tennessee; Howard Congregational UCC, Nashville Tennessee; Beloved Community, Birmingham Alabama; First United Church, Belvidere Tennessee.

### Jottings from June

A new year! New beginnings! Epiphany!

Tue, January 19, 2016  
Web and Teleconference

**PATHWAYS Committee**  
Fri, January 22, 2016  
Conference Office

**Commission on Ministry Meeting**  
Sat, January 23, 2016  
Pilgrim UCC,  
Chattanooga

### Conference Staff

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### Connect with Us!



The new year is a time for possibilities and resolutions. Unfortunately for many of us, neither seem to come to fruition. And, despite our hopes and wishes, a new year does not mean that all that has burdened us in the past year magically disappears. Sometimes our resolutions are ways to address what we carry forward, like too much weight or bad habits or not enough time with family or not enough time in prayer. But no matter how much we wish for these changes, we know they don't come without some hard work and perseverance.



We are entering the last year of my designated term and there is much that we need to do in the remaining months and especially in 2016. We will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary of our establishment as a Conference in the United Church of Christ. But we have much work to do to honor that legacy of ministry and to remember how we got here and what that history encourages us to do and be as we move into the future God envisions for this ministry.

There are critical needs in the Southeast Conference if we are to continue a viable and sustainable ministry. We have need of contributions of funding, expertise, skills, experience, and much prayer as we see our way forward. The nominating committee will be seeking people to step up and offer their time and talents. We will have a grand celebration at Annual Meeting which will require the investment of resources and creativity and people to attend the party. The Board of Directors will continue to envision our needs for ministry and seek to chart a course that will address those needs. But we also need to hear the needs of the people to make sure that we are hearing the voices of the whole community.

And we need to begin to think about transitions-in structure, in bylaws, in personnel, in ministries, in society, in our own lives. We each have an agenda for the coming months in our personal lives and I hope that you will be able to contribute to the agenda for the work of the Southeast Conference as well as we seek to celebrate and create.

Happy New Year!

## From the Conference Office

### UCC History & Polity Course Starts Jan 20

PATHWAYS, the leadership formation program of the Southeast Conference, will be offering the UCC History and Polity course in January 2016. [Read more...](#)

### 50th Anniversary Calendars are here!

The Commemorative 50th Anniversary Calendars of the Southeast Conference have been printed, boxed and shipped to our churches. [Read more...](#)

### 2016 is the 50th Anniversary of the Southeast Conference

We have started a planning process that will span the entire year and engage the Annual Meeting of the Southeast Conference in June. [Read more...](#)

### Communications Update: Changing to Serve You

## **Better**

In an attempt to be more effective in communicating to the Conference, we will be changing some of the ways we have been using to get the news out. [Read more...](#)

## **News from Around the Conference and Beyond**

### **Garden of Grace Provides Flood Recovery Assistance**

The UCC congregation in Columbia, SC, assisted a dozen households with more than two-dozen residents with financial and labor help from October's historic flood to the end of 2015. [Read more...](#)

### **Providing Hope at Christmas and Beyond**

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution featured Virginia Highland Church in their December 22, 2015 edition. [Read more...](#)

### **UCC Ministry Education Scholarships Available**

Ministry Education Scholarships are available to those Members in Discernment who are preparing for authorized ministry in the United Church of Christ. [Read more...](#)

### **Amber Kirkendoll is a Brown Endowment Scholar**

Congratulations to Amber Kirkendoll, pastor at Safe Harbor Family Church in Flowood, Mississippi. She is one of the 66 Brown Endowment Scholars selected for the 2015-16 academic year. [Read more...](#)

### **Back Bay Mission Opportunities**

Back Bay Mission (a UCC ministry) will open its 2017 Mission Trip Calendar on January 1, 2016. Mission immersion experiences at Back Bay Mission are a great opportunity to serve the poor and marginalized of the Mississippi Gulf Coast while learning about poverty and social justice. [Read more...](#)

### **Still Speaking 2.0 UCC Identity Campaign**

God is Still Speaking, the identity campaign that branded the United Church of Christ in a distinctive way and helped define its progressive voice in the faith community, is getting an upgrade/refresh in 2016. [Read more...](#)